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6 Leningrad Marine Guards Recalled

Move Called 'Precautionary' as Security Investigation Widens

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The six Marine guards at the U.S. consulate in Leningrad are being recalled and replaced as a "precautionary" move in a widening investigation of embassy security scandals, the Defense and State departments said yesterday.

The action follows announcement this week that a Marine guard assigned to the consulate four years ago is suspected of espionage for allegedly allowing Soviet agents access to the American compound. The 28 Marine guards at the Moscow embassy have been recalled after the arrest of two guards on espionage charges.

"There is no evidence that any of the returning Marines [from Leningrad] are implicated in any wrongdoing," the two departments said in a joint statement. "This measure is precautionary in nature . . ."

Administration sources said the six will be questioned in an effort to determine whether the Soviets have been attempting to infiltrate the consulate by using Soviet women to entice guards or other U.S. personnel.

Three former Marine guards, including Sgt. John J. Weirick, 26, who served at Leningrad from 1981-82 and the two Marines assigned to the Moscow embassy,

have been accused of sexual involvement with Soviet women who allegedly persuaded the guards to allow Soviet agents into the two compounds.

Administration officials said the six Leningrad guards will be replaced in May. Pentagon and State Department officials said there appears to be no connection between Weirick and any of the Leningrad force.

In a related matter, Senate Minority Leader Robert J. Dole (R-Kan.) said former U.S. ambassador Arthur Hartman may have blocked security improvements at the Moscow embassy when he served there three years ago on grounds that it could damage U.S.-Soviet relations.

Dole demanded that State Department officials give the Senate leadership a classified cable that Hartman allegedly sent here in 1984 and that Dole said "may have succeeded in blocking the proposed new and tougher security measures." State Department officials had no immediate response.

One administration official said that, although none of the six Leningrad guards is suspected of espionage, "it seems good to get a fresh start."

The official said, "This is part of the effort to begin with new people, even more carefully selected and briefed before they go in."

Administration officials said 20

handpicked Marine guards have been assembled in Frankfurt, West Germany, awaiting visas to begin replacing guards now at the embassy in Moscow.

Sources said U.S. officials are not pushing the Soviets to speed the visas until after Secretary of State George P. Shultz's visit there next week. Sources said embassy officials are reluctant to train new guards as they attempt to accommodate Shultz's entourage.

An embassy official in Moscow said security procedures for the visit are different from in the past, but he declined to elaborate. The official said the embassy is "operating in a secure mode" and said Shultz will "conduct his conversations in the embassy."

About 100 Naval Investigative Service agents have been assigned to the security scandal cases that began with arrest of Sgt. Clayton J. Lonetree, 25, on espionage allegations. Similar charges followed against Cpl. Arnold Bracy, 21, who occasionally worked as Lonetree's partner at the embassy.

Earlier this week, officials charged Staff Sgt. Robert S. Stufflebeam, 24, with three counts of failing to report contacts with foreign nationals. He is not suspected of espionage, they said.

Staff writer Celestina Bohlen in Moscow contributed to this report.